

Glossary of Terms for the Communication Arts MAP Test

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“Addresses the Topic”: Writing that shows a clear relationship between the writing prompt and the controlling idea of the paper.

“Another Word”: A phrase used on the Communication Arts MAP Test instead of the word “synonym.”

Awareness of Audience: Writing for a specific purpose with a specific individual or group in mind (for example, parents, peers, or a group of people who share a particular view of life or opinion).

Cause and Effect: Describes the connection between a cause (or reason) and its effects (or results). A cause makes something occur; an effect is the outcome of the cause.

Chart: Something written or drawn that presents information in an organized, easily-viewed form. Usually includes labels for clarity. A type of graphic organizer.

Classify: To place persons or things together in a group because they are similar in some way.

Clustering: A form of graphic organizer used to group ideas around a theme, characteristic, category, or word. Clustering is most often used as a prewriting activity to generate ideas, but may also be used to demonstrate understanding of reading. “Webbing” is a related term, and is often used synonymously.

Cohesive Devices: Elements that bind the writing together as a whole. Cohesive devices may include a logical method of sentence arrangement; pronouns that refer to previous sentences; repetition of words, synonyms, or ideas to create an effect; parallel sentence structure; or transitional words such as “first,” “last,” and “also.”

Comparison/Contrast: A process of identifying similarities and/or differences. For example, on the Communication Arts MAP Test, students might be asked to compare the motivations of the main characters from two different passages or to create a graphic organizer to show the differences between the plot lines of two passages.

Constructed Response: Items that require students to supply rather than select an appropriate answer or response. Most constructed response items on the Communication Arts MAP Test require a response with supporting details and/or examples in order to receive full credit.

Controlling Idea: In writing, the implicit or explicit message maintained throughout a piece of writing. “Main idea” is a related term used in reading.

Demonstrate: To describe or explain by use of examples.

Descriptive Language: Language that uses details that appeal to the senses so that a reader may easily imagine how something looks, sounds, feels, tastes, or smells. Often called “sensory details,” descriptive language may be literal or figurative.

Detail: An individual and specific piece of information. In the constructed response portion of the Communication Arts MAP Test, the term “detail” refers to specific text-based support of an answer. Students are also expected to use “specific and relevant details” in their writing in session 2 of the test.

Diagram: A plan or sketch that shows individual parts and their spatial relationships to each other and/or to the whole (for example, directions for assembly). A type of graphic organizer.

Draft (Rough Draft): A preliminary version of a piece of writing. Beginning with the Spring 2000 Communication Arts MAP Test, students will do their rough drafts on their own paper instead of in the test booklet.

Evaluate: To make a judgement of quality based on evidence.

Figurative Language: Writing or speech not intended to be interpreted literally. Figurative language is written or spoken to create a special effect or feeling. Examples include figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, irony, paradox, and oxymoron.

Final Copy: The final version of a piece of writing, created after revision. On the Communication Arts MAP Test, the final copy is the version of the student’s writing that is written into the test booklet.

Freewriting: The process of writing quickly and freely on any topic. Freewriting is often used as a prewriting activity before a more formal drafting process.

Graph: Something written or drawn that shows comparisons or relationships. Common forms include bar graphs and line graphs. A type of graphic organizer.

Graphic Organizer: A visual device for organizing information around a concept, theme, or topic (for example, charts, graphs, Venn diagrams, mind maps, webs, drawings, etc.). On the Communication Arts MAP Test, graphic organizers are given and sometimes partially filled in for 3rd grade students. At the 7th and 11th grade levels, graphic organizers are sometimes given for students to fill in, while at other times students must create and fill in their own organizers.

Holistic Scoring: With holistic scoring, a response is scored based on an overall impression arrived at by the scorer according to specific, written criteria. All criteria found in the scoring guide are considered equally important. Holistic scoring is used only to score the writing portion of the Communication Arts MAP test (Session 2). The scoring guide used to score this portion of the test is available to all school districts.

Illustrate: To draw pictures, either literally or figuratively.

Label: Identifying different parts of a whole. On open-ended graphic organizers (found at the middle school and high school levels on the Communication Arts MAP test) students are asked to “label [their] graphic organizer[s] appropriately.” Titles, headings, and legends are examples of labels.

Main Idea: In reading, the implicit or explicit message of a written work. “Controlling idea” is a related term in writing.

Mind Mapping: A form of graphic organizer that addresses the different modalities of learners by using illustrations, symbols, colors, and words to represent understanding. Mind mapping may also be used as a prewriting activity.

Mood: The feeling created in the reader by a literary passage.

Narrator: The person or character who is telling the story.

“Opposite”: A term used on the Communication Arts MAP Test instead of the term “antonym.”

Passage: A written work, in part or whole, used as stimulus material for test items.

Performance Event: A problematic situation posed by a prompt that requires multi-step problem solving often supported by explanation. On the Communication Arts MAP Test, the performance event involves writing a paper to a prompt.

Precise Language: Words that clearly express meaning; words that are exact and definite.

Prewriting Activity: An activity used to generate and organize ideas prior to writing. Examples of activities that might be used as prewriting activities include brainstorming, clustering, freewriting, mind mapping, and outlining.

Problem: A question to be considered, solved, or answered.

Revise: To change a piece of writing to improve it in style or content; may include adding or deleting ideas, reorganizing, and correcting mechanical errors.

Scoring Guide: A device used to assess performance based on a list of specific criteria. The term “rubric” is often used instead of “scoring guide.”

Summary: A condensed version of a story or reading passage that includes the main points of the beginning, middle, and end. On the Communication Arts MAP Test, the words “In your own words...” will be used at the elementary level to begin items calling for summary writing. The word “summarize” will be used at the middle school and high school levels.

Text-Based Support: A term used in many of the scoring guides for constructed response items on the Communication Arts MAP Test. “Text-based support” refers to the use by a student of specific details and examples from the reading passage to support his or her answers.

Thesis Statement: A controlling statement to be supported in a piece of writing.

Tone: The author’s attitude toward his or her material, audience, or both.

Topic: The subject of the writing.

Topic Sentence: A sentence that states the main idea of the paragraph.

Venn Diagram: A form of graphic organizer that uses overlapping circles to identify similarities and differences.

Vivid Language: Words that help the reader see, feel, smell, taste, and hear the subject; words that evoke realistic images. See “Descriptive Language.”

Voice: A stylistic effect that allows a reader to identify a writer’s personality through the written word.

Webbing: A graphic organizer that may be used as a prewriting activity to generate many ideas around a concept, theme, or topic, or as a graphic representation of a student’s understanding of his or her reading. “Clustering” is a related term, and is often used synonymously.

Writer’s Checklist: A list of criteria used by a writer to self-check his or her writing to determine revision needs. On the Communication Arts MAP Test, the writer’s checklist precedes the final copy and is a condensed version of the full writing scoring guide used to score the writing portion of the test.

Writing Prompt: One or more sentences that provide the student with a situation or topic about which to write and the directions for the writing. It serves to stimulate a written response from the student. There is no specific answer to the prompt; however, the student’s response should relate to the prompt.